

On keeping the kink out of research-creative link

AUG 26 1968

If Henry Ford had known about market research it is doubtful that the Model T would ever have come into being. The roads were abominable. Tires blew out every few miles. There were few places where you could buy gasoline. The price was too high for the middle-class income. Many cities had ridiculous laws (Example: man ringing bell must precede auto by day, must carry lantern at night).

But Henry had no survey, so he went ahead. He made his own effort at solving the low income problem by paying his workers the unheard of wage of \$1 an hour. This not only made them all a prospect but it also forced other plants to raise wages and thus create more prospects. Once enough people had cars they began to demand better roads. Filling stations came into being, and so forth.

Today, however, market research is a fact of advertising life. Especially so when millions of dollars of budget are at stake just in the television game, not to mention the costs of color pages in the print media.

Seeking Solutions • Sometimes the successful advertising solution is the obvious one. Sometimes it isn't so obvious. I've had it both ways over the years.

When beer in cans first came out, everybody advertised how convenient they were. No bottles to return, lighter to carry home, easier to stack in the refrigerator, etc. Yet can sales lagged considerably behind expectations.

Research showed that consumers freely granted that it was more convenient to buy beer in cans. But they didn't think the beer tasted as good. Tests showed that blindfolded they couldn't tell the difference, but they weren't blindfolded when they bought the beer. Besides that tavern keepers didn't like to reach down in the icy water to fish out a can when they could grab a bottle by the neck without getting their hands wet.

Grocers, who were just starting to sell beer, were crazy about beer in cans because they didn't have to fool around with deposits and empties. It was one clean sale and a lot more profitable. They also could display beer in cans in the sunlight without affecting the flavor.

In this case the solution was the obvious one. Advertising directed to the consumers told them how good beer in cans was because the flavor was completely protected from both light

and air. Advertising to the grocer pointed out the obvious advantages to him. We didn't even bother to try to convince the tavern keeper and it was all very easy once a good research job gave us the facts.

Sometimes the solution isn't so obvious. The introductory campaign on Marlboro cigarettes faced some formidable problems. You will recall Marlboro was a new cigarette, a popular-priced filter with an old name which previously had been worn by a high-priced Turkish blend largely smoked by middle-aged ladies in New England and some members of the limp-wrist set. Smack in the middle of a long Roper report on cigarettes done for the industry it said the "people tend to think of filter cigarettes as slightly more feminine than masculine."

From this one might have drawn the conclusion that the thing to do was to make Marlboro a woman's cigarette. The fact is, however, that men are heavier smokers than women and it previously had been found that while women would smoke a cigarette considered a man's cigarette, most men would not smoke a brand considered a woman's cigarette.

From this came the decision to advertise Marlboro as the filter cigarette for men. We never said this. We simply showed in the TV spots and print ads brutally virile, tattooed men smoking the cigarette and used strong, simple masculine copy. It was more than a year before a woman ever appeared in the commercials. At the end of the first year Marlboro smokers were 52% men, 48% women.

One problem agencies continually run up against in market research is that there never seems to be enough time or money to do it as well or as

much as we would like. What we really have to ask ourselves is how much of this research is really necessary. Sometimes resourcefulness can go a long way.

Mop Plot • My favorite example goes back 20 years to the O-Cedar sponge mop. It looked like a product that had everything but money to launch it.

The research people at Young & Rubicam selected a cross-section of 50 housewives. Each was given a new mop and told she could keep it if she would agree to answer a questionnaire after using it two weeks. The questionnaire uncovered a wealth of information but when each woman answered the "What did you like best" question with "I don't get my hands wet" or something similar we forgot everything else for the time being. All print and TV copy was themed "New wet mop keeps hands dry." O-Cedar's initial \$5,000 investment turned into over \$1 million in billings earned entirely by an advertising allowance on each mop sold in one year's time.

This experience also pointed out that it's no time to stop trying to figure things out just because you have a success on your hands. The initial plan in Chicago used newspapers as a major medium with a modest spot schedule on that newfangled medium, television. At the time there were only about 25,000 sets in the city and the plan was to drop TV after the first month. Warranty card research discovered though that three out of four buyers said they had seen it on TV.

As you can imagine the emphasis on media changed after that.

Better communication between creative people and market research people is no longer merely desirable, it is vitally necessary.



Draper Daniels three years ago opened his own Chicago agency, Draper Daniels Inc., after many years with other agencies. In 1961-62 he served Kennedy administration as national export expansion coordinator in U. S. Commerce Department. Just prior to starting his own firm Mr. Daniels had been executive vice president in charge of creative services at Compton Advertising, Chicago, and before that executive vice president of central region of McCann-Erickson.

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